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commonweal

Fiftieth Anniversary Year

WORLD HUNGER

THE FOOD CRISIS
ARTHUR SIMON

FEEDING THE UNFED
MARTIN M. McLAUGHLIN

GLOBAL JUSTICE
THE EDITORS

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ROBERT McAFEE BROWN WIESEL'S SONG: LOST & FOUND AGAIN
JOHN COONEY PENTECOSTALS AND NORTHERN IRELAND
COLIN L. WESTERBECK, JR. LE GRAND THEATRE de JEAN RENOIR
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NEWS & VIEWS

Deaths in the 'Family'

Two more magazines are gone, victims in large measure to escalating mail costs.

One is *The Lamp*, 71-year-old monthly of the Franciscan Friars of the Atonement. It ceased publication with its July issue, leaving behind a family of 23,000 subscribers and a proud editorial record in the area of inter-Christian relations.

"It would seem that the federal government views with unconcern the progressive exclusion of all but the very rich from effective media communications," said Father Charles Angell, S.A., *The Lamp's* editor. "Low postal rates have traditionally enabled religious and other public-interest groups to inexpensively air their views. Today the number of people who can effectively get their ideas across to the public is rapidly diminishing. What does this spell for the future of our free society?"

Also gone: *Intellectual Digest*; circulation, 354,917.

Like *The Lamp, Intellectual Digest* was squeezed by rising publication costs, incuding a 21 percent paper increase last month. But the Postal Service was also responsible for the kill. The recent 23 percent increase for second-class mail helped to create "intolerable burdens."

The demise of *Intellectual Digest* was noted in the *Congressional Record*, together with the keen of an official of the Ziff-Davis Publishing Co.: "What this country needs is more magazines like *Intellectual Digest*, but what it's getting is more and more sex magazines."

As if to underscore that lamentation the *New York Times'* business section a few days later announced the birth of yet another "nudie" magazine, this one with *three* centerfolds—one man, one woman and one mixed couple. It debuted with a press run of 600,000 copies and commanding an ad page-rate of $2,910 for four color and $2,205 for black and white!

What can the thoughtful person do to help the magazine of content in its current travail? Ziff-Davis executive vice-president Bradford Briggs offers some advice in *The Progressive:*

"a) As a citizen, you must understand that the U.S. Postal Service's present requirement to pay for itself will result in a severe curtailment of magazines available. Let your opposition be heard.

"b) As a reader, you must be willing to pay somewhat more for your favorite magazines if you are to continue to receive them.

"c) As an advertiser, you must see to it that a portion of your advertising investment supports worthwhile magazines. Remember that worthwhile magazines attract worthwhile customers."

Briggs isn't optimistic. "It probably won't happen," he remarked apropos his advice.

On top of news about *The Lamp* and *Intellectual Digest* came ominous word about *American Report*. It isn't dead, but the provocative biweekly tabloid edited by Bob Hoyt and published by Clergy and Laity Concerned (CALC) is in deep trouble.

It missed an issue in late May, and though it was able to return to the presses in June, its longevity remains a question mark.

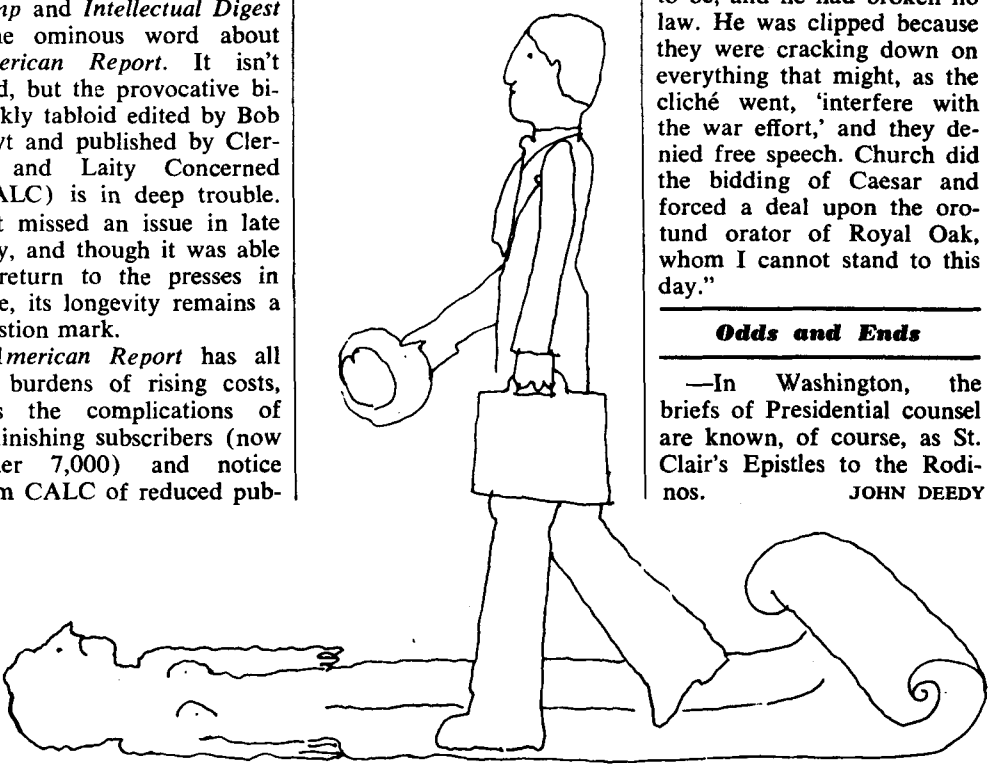
American Report has all the burdens of rising costs, plus the complications of diminishing subscribers (now under 7,000) and notice from CALC of reduced publishing subsidy. CALC's executive committee was recommending a complete shutting off of subsidy, but this was not accepted by the steering committee. There will be subsidy through '74, though on a considerably smaller scale.

Word of *American Report's* troubles sparked some speculation that CALC was jettisoning the publication in reaction to heat generated by the printing of Daniel Berrigan's Arab-Israeli talk.

The speculation did not prove out. "*American Report's* difficulties reflect the financial reality of the whole organization," one official said. CALC money is running out and *American Report* just "cost too much."

Supporting the comment was a mail piece received the same day. CALC was appealing for $140,000 to carry through the next two years a campaign to halt production of the B-1 bomber.

As for *American Report*, it's looking for donations and subscriptions ($10 a year; 235R East 49th St., NYC 10017).



Bea Weidner/Women's Survival Manual/LNS

Coughlin-McLaughlin

The ineffective Jesuit crackdown on Father John McLaughlin set *Pittsburgh Catholic* columnist Charles Owen Rice recollecting on the effective crackdown on Father Charles Coughlin:

"Can a line be drawn which a priest may not cross while engaged in political discourse? Not easily. Thirty years ago there was a broad consensus that Father Coughlin had crossed such a line and thus deserved the measure of censure and restriction that he received from ecclesiastical authority. At the time I had only mild misgivings but, with the years, I have become convinced that both Church and State were wrong in silencing that troublesome priest and in conspiring to do so.

"Mind you! Charles E. Coughlin was dreadful. Intolerant and unfair in polemic, he was, worse yet, an anti-Semite, and let no one tell you differently. Nonetheless he was against the war and against the government, as he had every right to be, and he had broken no law. He was clipped because they were cracking down on everything that might, as the cliché went, 'interfere with the war effort,' and they denied free speech. Church did the bidding of Caesar and forced a deal upon the orotund orator of Royal Oak, whom I cannot stand to this day."

Odds and Ends

—In Washington, the briefs of Presidential counsel are known, of course, as St. Clair's Epistles to the Rodinos.

JOHN DEEDY

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CORRESPONDENCE

Offensive Defense

Washington, D.C.

To the Editors: One of the most annoying aspects of too many Catholic "defenders of the faith" (and one which, more than any other tendency, tends to make me give up such discussions) is the excessive rancor of their replies, the need to attack one's person and the unwillingness to deal with the objective content. James Gaffney's reply to my critique of the Notre Dame statement [letter: May 24] is a case in point.

It should be accepted that if I suspect that the answer to my three questions is 'No,' this suspicion is based on what I regard as broad and valid sampling of such climates. Indeed James Gaffney's own letter is the best proof of that. It should also have been clear that I would wish that the answer were 'yes.' But, finally, James Gaffney attacks the conclusion of my remarks while ignoring their context; namely, my dismay at the docetic and in-house character of the Notre Dame statement. In an age of national and world disaster on many fronts, to write a statement over several years on the mission of the Catholic university which is so oblivious to the world we live in is highly shocking. I don't see how any group that does that can be serious guides to faith and morals today. However my remarks were intended as a challenge, not a dismissal, of that school.

ROSEMARY RUETHER

Lost Innocence

Green Bay, Wisc.

To the Editors: Irving Louis Horowitz' piece on Watergate [Apr. 5] is a distressing affair. If we are in the kind of "apocalyptic" moral crisis he suggests, his essay is an example of its own thesis. Once more we are asked to face the loss of American innocence, no less than a "two hundred-year-old age of innocence." Given our well publicized

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GLOBAL JUSTICE

Yes, Virginia, there is a class war, this one not within one society but between rich nations and poor ones—a fact made more plain by a reading of the two articles on the subject in this issue. At the recent UN session on raw materials and development, Algeria's President Houari Boumediene was only the first to call on the developing nations to wrest control of their resources from foreign domination. Advocating nationalization of resources and strict control of sales abroad, he said: "The raw-material-producing countries insist on being masters in their own houses." His sentiments were echoed by many, and the Chinese representative undoubtedly reflected a widely held view when he said: "The two superpowers are the biggest international exploiters and oppressors of today." The producers and the consumers of oil, minerals and food are eyeball-to-eyeball as the developing nations threaten to form cartels like that in oil if necessary to secure justice from the rich nations. This is not the kind of talk people in the U.S. welcome, but it is understandable, nonetheless.

There is a long- and a short-term problem. Nobel Laureate Dr. Norman E. Borlaug, father of the Green Revolution, estimates that as many as 20 million people may die in various parts of the world next year because of crop shortages. The immediate crisis is underlined by what is taking place on the continent of Africa. There can be some disagreement about what is happening in countries like Niger, Volta and Ethiopia but only to a limited extent: should those who will starve be numbered in the millions or "only" in the hundreds of thousands? It is incredible to believe that the Western nations will sit by and let this happen. A beginning of help has been made; much more remains to be done, as Arthur Simon points out in his article.

The long-range problem is different and even more difficult. Americans are conscious of how oil prices have gone up, because these have hurt us; we are less aware that soaring prices for our grains and soybeans threaten other countries with starvation. For decades countries like the United States have profited from what was and is an essentially unjust international social order. In a world of plentiful supply of raw materials, industrialized countries like the United States bought cheap and sold dear. One-sided tariff and price policies enabled us to grow fat on the needs of the world's

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poor, as we profited from an international buyer's market in raw materials—a state of affairs which put the less developed countries at our mercy. Today that situation is changing radically, and considerations of pragmatic self-interest as well as moral values demand the creation of a system which takes into account the basic interdependence of all nations. America is rich, but the oil shortage forced us to recognize that we are not omnipotent. Oil, tin, bauxite, mercury, chromium—the list of things we must import could be extended at length, but the point is clear: the notion of a completely self-sufficient America is illusory.

What is needed is a more equitable world economic system, one that takes into account the harsh global facts of expanding population, poverty, food shortages and the scarcity of natural resources. World food stocks are now at their lowest level in 20 years. Given this situation, intensified class warfare between nations is inevitable unless justice is achieved for the developing countries, countries which include something like two out of every three persons in the world. Enlightened statesmen have talked of the need for such an improved international order for many years, but today the discussion takes place in a radically changed climate. For the first time there is a growing awareness that the earth's riches are not infinite, that progress and increasing abundance are not inevitable, that a fair sharing of what is available is the only answer. With the world desperately short of grain, for instance, how long can we Americans justify a per capita consumption of 2000 pounds of grain a year, most of it inefficiently used to fatten meat-producing animals, when one-fifth of that amount would constitute an adequate diet in most parts of the world? In the same way, how can the U.S.S.R. justify its huge purchase of American grain when most of it was also to be used in the wasteful production of meat? The world is critically short of chemical fertilizers, and poorer countries have had to cut back on their imports because of scarcity and quadrupled prices. This scarcity currently constitutes the greatest single obstacle to increased food production; a nation short of one million tons of fertilizer will suffer a loss of ten times that amount in grain production. The globe's basic ability to produce the critically short chemical fertilizer must therefore be expanded. In the meantime, though, as Senator Hubert H. Humphrey has suggested, could not the United States give up using the three millions tons of chemical fertilizer now spread annually on lawns and golf courses—fertilizer that could spell the difference between life and death elsewhere in the world?

People do not need to starve; there are steps we can take, other courses of action we can follow. The central fact we must remember is that the world's resources are limited, and the decisions on how they should be used are moral ones. Fortunately, there are signs of an increasing national awareness of our need for moral discussion of these issues, and there are heartening signs that the nation's churches and synagogues will join in emphasizing this need for ethical choices, as evidenced recently by the valuable Aspen Consultation on Global Justice, convoked by the Overseas Development Council, which drew religious leaders of various denominations from all over the country. What is needed is a change in personal and national life-styles, which is why Bread for the World is calling on Americans to observe three meatless days a week. Individuals cannot in good conscience consume, consume, consume in the world's most affluent country without regard to the specter of starvation abroad; they also cannot ignore what their elected representatives do to make the problem worse, as when the House of Representatives recently denied the World Bank additional funds to provide development loans for poor countries, a potentially disastrous move lamented elsewhere in these pages by both Arthur Simon and Martin M. McLaughlin. It has long been clear that an individualistic morality is too narrow; today it is equally obvious that those who teach social morality must emphasize the concept of global justice. On the national level, the United States must take the lead in working for justice for the developing nations, in international bodies like the United Nations but very particularly in matters like our own trade and tariff policies too. It is all very well for Secretary of State Kissinger to caution the poor nations to avoid threats, but if the rich nations do not open their eyes and act justly, more than threats will be the result. As both contributors to this issue emphasize, we must labor not only to feed the hungry right now but also to achieve global justice and true peace tomorrow—a work for which development is simply another name.

Pentecostals and Northern Ireland

The spiritual diaspora of the neo-pentecostal movement has now made itself manifest in Ireland. The spirit of Notre Dame and Duquesne Universities has spread to battle-scarred Belfast, expanding Dublin and self-reliant Cork. It is a development of some significance in an assessment of the neo-pentecostal movement. For the movement, which is considered by its followers to be the main spiritual regeneration movement of the twentieth century, is now coming face to face with what may be contemporary Christianity's greatest sectarian scar: Northern Ireland.

This encounter has been noted by many of the advocates of the movement in Ireland. The significance of the confrontation was stressed recently at an ecumenical meeting in Drogheda by an Anglican rector, the Rev-

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erend Gordon Pamment of Rathcormac, County Cork. He predicted, hopefully, "From what it is already achieving in the North, there is no doubt that the charismatic movement could make a significant contribution to bringing peace and reconciliation in the present tragic situation that afflicts our land."

In making this prediction Dr. Pamment was raising one of the most crucial challenges that the worldwide charismatic movement has had to face: in Ireland, can the movement possibly spread and do what the established churches have so far failed to do and help bring about peace to Northern Ireland? Unfortunately, he did not develop this point and explain how he thought that the infant movement could effectively make at least some contribution towards bringing about peace. But he did raise the question and he did outline the present position of the movement in the North on which he was basing his hope. Although he noted that the movement was numerically stronger in Dublin and that it had also taken root in other places including Cork and Limerick, Dr. Pamment said that "the most interesting and significant effects of Irish charismatic renewal are to be seen in the North." He then gave a birds-eye view of the movement there: "There are three main groups in Belfast; one in the New Lodge area, one on the Falls Road, one in Queen's University. All three groups include Roman Catholics and Protestants, and each has an average attendance of around 50. There is also a small group that meets in Anderstown. Another group of 100 meets weekly in Lurgan and another in Benburb, Co. Tyrone."

Dr. Pamment then quoted the view of the Church of Ireland Chaplain at Queen's University, the Rev. Cecil Kerr, that "Charismatic shared prayer groups are an expression of grass-roots ecumenism, when people come together to pray in the power of the Holy Spirit and in the name of the Lord Jesus, and they discover a unity together that no church leaders, councils, committees could ever bring or impose. It is obviously a work of God's Holy Spirit."

Another Voice

That basically is the evidence presented at Drogheda, which may strike many as more wishful than substantial. However, a post-graduate student of the Irish School of Ecumenics, the Rev. Jerome McCarthy, C.S.Sp., has in the January issue of *One in Christ* written an article specifically on the theme of "The Charismatic Renewal and Reconciliation in Ireland," which is complementary to Dr. Pamment's prediction. Father McCarthy writes that neo-pentecostalism "has a power and a force in it that makes much doctrinaire and bureaucratic ecumenism seem irrelevant in the face of such existentially urgent situations as are to be found, for example, in the North of Ireland. Indeed, the appearance of neo-pentecostalism in Northern Ireland about three years ago in the Presbyterian Church and more recently in several others, including the Catholic Church, is bringing a deep sense of hope to those involved in it and to many others who see its visible effects on people. Perhaps there has begun a gentle revolution that by quietly changing people irrespective of denominational loyalties, will eventually have a visible effect in the overall society of Ulster. At least this is the conviction of the growing number of neo-pentecostals, not only in Northern Ireland but also in the South."

If the "gentle revolution" that Father McCarthy and Dr. Pamment advocate is to achieve the very large claims they make for it, I think that serious attention must be given to four main questions. Firstly, how can the charismatic renewal movement help eradicate sectarianism and "tribal religion" in the North? Can a movement that emphasizes the heart as the central mode of expression of religion appeal to killers whose hearts are so hardened that they feel no compunction in killing men, women and children in countless sordid situations? Can the movement communicate with the "men of violence"?

Secondly, how will the movement relate to tensions within the established churches as they painfully attempt to overcome the habit of 400 years of denominational rivalry? Can the movement help remove the deep divisions and suspicions within some of the members of the Protestant churches who, like Mr. Paisley, wish to have nothing to do with "the Church of Rome"? Can it touch the hearts of deeply resentful Catholics? Can the movement assist in the creation of the needed ecumenical structures?

Thirdly, can the charismatic renewal movement, with its appeal to young people, help to counter the growing trend of secularization in Northern Ireland and the Republic?

Fourthly, can the charismatic movement encourage the Irish Churches to engage in a radical social critique of themselves as institutions and can it help to prompt Irish churchmen and members to a greater social awareness and involvement?

No doubt many more questions could be asked, but I think these are the fundamental questions that need to be answered if the "gentle revolution" is to be effective. If it is to have real impact, the movement must avoid the classical dangers of being fundamentalist, personal and strictly one-dimensional. It must be a "baptism in the Spirit" but it must not be "so heavenly minded that it is no earthly use." It must evolve an overall strategy.

The Drogheda ecumenical meeting has clearly spelled out the issue. Could not an international charismatic conference in Dublin or Belfast work out the strategy?

JOHN COONEY

(*John Cooney is* Commonweal's *regular correspondent in Ireland.*)

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THE FOOD CRISIS

ARTHUR SIMON

The long pull will require substantial commitments by prosperous nations

Although the specter of more than six million Africans on the edge of starvation in the Sahel concentrates our minds on the need for immediate relief, long-range development efforts there are far more important—and a more difficult task around which to mobilize an international response.

Africans south of the Sahara need help now. Malnutrition, familiar to the citizens of these impoverished lands in the best of times, spreads like an uncontrolled plague. Farm and nomad families have been driven from land that no longer nourishes them. Now they huddle around the cities in shanties and relief camps, where burials are everyday occurrences. While some die from starvation, more succumb to measles and influenza, which often prove fatal to those weakened by hunger.

Aside from death, the toll in dislocated lives is impossible to calculate. Nomads cannot simply return to their land after the first good rain. The head of FAO livestock policy and planning says that it might take seven years to restore pastures, and maybe twice that long for some land.

One UN spokesman said that the increasing human and animal populations "probably had reached a carrying capacity before the drought." The drought sharply reduced that carrying capacity, but overgrazing played a part, too, in the delicate ecological balance of this region. Now the desert is advancing southward at rates that range from three to 30 miles a year. No one knows whether the advance can be halted or reversed, though the answer hinges primarily on whether or not the drought is permanent. A southward migration of the monsoons, which had adversely affected Asians, too, may indicate a new and enduring weather pattern.

In March a shaken UN Secretary General, Kurt Waldheim, returned from the Sahel and said that thousands were dying and "the worst is definitely not over."

Appeals to the international community have so far brought pledges of more than 568,000 tons of grain, which, together with food in the 1973 pipeline that arrived this year, totals more than 700,000 tons. That's nibbles compared to the 19-million-ton purchase of U.S. grain by the Russians in 1972, but a lot by the experience of these poor and sparsely populated countries. Whether or not it is enough remains to be seen. Shipment arrivals have been slow, a bigger problem than that of quantity. But the biggest problem is getting the food from ports to remote areas. If the monsoon does come by early July—everyone's wish—dirt roads will wash out. In any case some airlifting of food appears certain, a costly part of the operation.

According to the UN, the main shortfalls now are of milk powder, lipids and high-protein blended foods, important especially to infants and pregnant or nursing mothers. In addition, cash contributions by governments have lagged far behind commodity contributions. The World Food Program of the UN appealed last year for a meager $30 million dollars, to be used as follows:

- $3 million—seeds
- 4 million—trucks
- 2 million—storage facilities
- 6 million—UNICEF (for children and mothers of infants)
- 5 million—World Health Organization (for medicine, etc.)
- 4 million—animal health care
- 6 million—animal feed

The importance of these items is at once apparent; yet by early April (the latest report available at writing) less than $14 million of this amount had been pledged.

What about U.S. assistance? It has greatly exceeded that of any other country, as well it should. Some of it came later than necessary and after a lot of prodding. Most recently a Senate-approved measure would add $50 million in emergency aid to the Sahel, plus $10

ARTHUR SIMON, *associate pastor of Trinity Lutheran Church in New York, is Acting Director of Bread for the World.*

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million to Ethiopia and $25 million to other African countries outside the Sahel—a reminder that famine is not confined to that region alone in Africa. By early June the measure was waiting action by a Senate-House conference that had not yet been appointed. (The House version was less generous than the Senate-approved bill, and members of the House Foreign Affairs Committee are the ones to contact, if the measure has not yet been resolved.)

The Long Pull

The foregoing speaks to the immediate crisis, which preoccupies us, but may not direct us to the greater, less dramatic task ahead: long-range development. Although the public is not generally alert to this need, people on the scene often are. A spokesman for Catholic Relief Services, which engages in food distribution in the Sahel, said, "Our main emphasis is on long-range development projects—well-digging, road construction, small dams—projects that run in the five-to-ten year period. We are more concerned about the long pull."

The long pull will require substantial commitments by prosperous nations, commitments that cannot, let us hope, depend for sustenance upon our feasting visually upon an ever-new generation of starving African children. The commitment will only come—in this country, certainly—if the trend of declining development aid is reversed.

Take the case of river blindness. River blindness is a disease that affects perhaps 10 million people who live along the Volta River basin—and a third or more of the total population in the Sahel. It afflicts maybe a million of them directly by causing debilitation, blindness and eventually death; and it drives the population away from fertile valleys. The disease is caused by a worm, transmitted by a fly, that multiplies inside the human body, where the worm's larvae may invade many organs. The flies swarm near the rivers and force people to abandon fertile land. River blindness turns productive land and people into social burdens. The United Nations, including the World Health Organization, has drawn up a 20-year, $120 million program to wipe out this disease. The FAO calls the program "the most detailed and far-reaching plan ever prepared to control a disease and to pave the way for economic development."

Who is to finance this patently commendable project? The International Development Association—the division of the World Bank that lends to the poorest countries at no interest—funding for which the U.S. House of Representatives rejected by a 248 to 155 vote in January. The Senate revived the measure on May 29 and it will go to the House for another try. But the difficulty that IDA encountered illustrates the problem of mobilizing support for the kind of long-term assistance that the Sahelian countries need. Because IDA's main emphasis will be rural development for families living in absolute poverty, it seems clear that substantial assistance for the Sahel (and elsewhere) is at stake in the way the House votes. Even if the House should reverse itself (nobody takes that for granted), a U.S. mindset that can barely salvage support for programs like IDA cannot sustain assistance over the long run to the Sahel, much less extend it to other countries where hunger and poverty are also the norm. That attitude could change, of course, given either visionary leadership or sufficient citizen mobilization.

A vision that could pave the way for such a change was embodied in Kissinger's address before the UN General Assembly's Special Session on Raw Materials and Development. It was a vision of interdependence in keeping with this nation's ideals. But whether it was a gut commitment, or a part of the Watergate syndrome—promise full cooperation, but give as little as possible—remains to be seen.

The United States now ranks 14th among 16 donor nations, when development assistance is measured as a percentage of GNP. The U.S. Food for Peace program has been drastically cut back, primarily because of rising food costs, and about 40 percent of what remains goes to South Vietnam.

The UN World Food Program has also been forced to cut back rather than expand its extensive food-for-work projects and food assistance for vulnerable population groups such as infants, nursing mothers and the elderly. Again, higher food prices and political realities so dictated, despite a manifest increase of hunger.

These are things that need to be turned around.

Will Congress legislate a "tithe" of U.S. grain exports so that 10 percent is set aside for grants or concessional sale to countries with acute shortages? Will the United States take part in a world food reserve program? More important, will we as a nation help substantially to raise the food-producing capacity of the billion poorest rural dwellers on earth? And will we do this as part of an overall commitment to a truly just world community?

The answers to these questions, rather than the size of this year's shipment of food to Africa, will measure the future for many in the Sahel.

Summer Schedule

In keeping with the usual practice, *Commonweal* is again appearing on alternate weeks during the summer months. Forthcoming issues will be dated July 26, August 9, August 23, September 6 and September 20. From then on we will resume our normal weekly publishing schedule.

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FEEDING THE UNFED

MARTIN M. McLAUGHLIN

The urgency of establishing a world food policy

Famine is often thought of as an old-fashioned, overly dramatic, "scare" word. But that is the word Ambassador Daniel P. Moynihan used on January 29 to describe to a Committee of the House of Representatives what he fears for India next year. Somehow the word seems appropriate not only for India, but for other parts of the world as well.

There is drought and starvation in the Sahelian states of Africa, on the rim of the encroaching Sahara desert. There are crop-destroying floods and starvation in Pakistan and Bangladesh. There are earthquakes and starvation in Nicaragua. And to add to all this there is now a huge, unprecedented rise in the prices of wheat, petroleum and fertilizer (made from petroleum), which threatens the food supplies of the heavily populated lesser-developed countries even more than do the natural disasters. The price rises and the long waits to fill the gas tank, now past at least for the time being, will cause discomfort in the U.S. and in the rest of the developed world; but for a large number of the billion people of India, Bangladesh, Pakistan, Indonesia, the Brazilian Northeast and some parts of Africa the results will be much more grim, perhaps fatal.

Lester Brown, Senior Fellow at the Overseas Development Council in Washington and former Administrator of the International Agricultural Development Service of the U.S. Department of Agriculture, has been preaching this gospel of scarcity for some years. As he sees it, the food crisis is not a temporary phenomenon, part of the cyclical operation of the laws of the weather and of supply and demand, but an indication that food scarcity is becoming chronic. Brown attributes this new and continuing food shortage not only to the rapid growth of developing-country populations, which still generates most of the increased demand, but also to rising affluence in both the developed and some developing countries.

MARTIN M. MCLAUGHLIN, *a former AID official, is a Senior Fellow at the Overseas Development Council in Washington.*

Affluence enriches not only our bank accounts, but also our taste for food. Brown points out that we want our protein now in the form of meat, not cereal; and protein in this form takes many times the amount of grain that direct consumption would require. As a result, he notes, the average Indian consumes about 400 pounds of grain per year, getting his protein directly; the average American consumes a ton per year, nearly all of it as meat, eggs, or milk. Since the annual increase in world grain production during the past three years has averaged 30 million tons, all of which has been absorbed either by population growth (22 million tons) or by rising prices (8 million tons), there has been no growth—in fact, there has been a reduction of the world's food reserves to less than a one-month supply. We may be, literally, one harvest, or one monsoon, away from catastrophe.

A problem of this magnitude requires both immediate and long-range action. Over the longer run people have to be enabled both to feed themselves and to eat better (i.e., improve nutrition). Immediately, however, it is necessary to feed the hungry. All the complexities of international economic development pale before the stark, clear fact that hungry people have to eat before they can develop. What Pope Paul VI said in *Populorum Progressio* in 1967 is no less true in 1974: "Today no one can be ignorant any longer of the fact that in whole continents countless men and women are ravished by hunger, countless children are undernourished, so that many of them die in infancy, while the physical growth and mental development of many others are retarded and as a result whole regions are condemned to the most distressing dependency."

Even before the energy crisis aggravated it, the food problem was seen to be so severe that the nonaligned nations, meeting last year in Algiers, and Secretary of State Kissinger, in his initial address at the United Nations, both called for worldwide attention to this problem. As a result the UN will convene a World Food Conference, at the government-minister level, in Rome in

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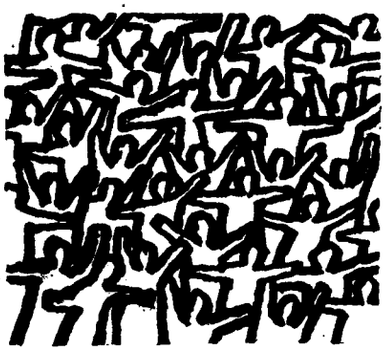
November, 1974, to address the question of food supplies. Already two preparatory meetings have taken place—one at UN headquarters in New York City and the second in Geneva—and Egyptian Deputy Prime Minister Sayed Marei has been designated Secretary General of the Conference, with Dr. John A. Hannah, former AID administrator, as one of his deputies. Another preparatory meeting is scheduled for Rome in October.

It seems essential that the World Food Conference go beyond production and consider distribution (and rural development) as well, i.e., it must move beyond economics, to politics. At this juncture in history, however, the U.S. does not have a national policy on world food. While we have had a foreign aid program over the years that heavily emphasized agricultural development and have used our food surpluses through PL 480 to help the less developed countries, we have generally shied away from such proposals as a world food bank under international management, to which we



would contribute a large share. Moreover, the House of Representatives, as recently as January 23, inexplicably refused to honor our painfully negotiated and agreed contribution to the International Development Agency (IDA), the World Bank family member that serves the poorest countries most directly. (Fortunately, the Senate vote on May 29 was just the opposite.)

In this respect some of our representatives seem to be out of phase with the sentiments of the people, who in a recent Overseas Development Council survey gave a 68 percent affirmative answer to the question of whether the rich countries should help poor ones. Ironically, the rejection of IDA replenishment by the House cuts the poor governments off from the main source of the public funds they use to support projects of private American and other voluntary agencies in their countries. Yet these organizations' projects are the charitable works for which the nay-voting Congressmen's constituents are earnestly raising money and contributing goods and services!

Among these private voluntary organizations and many individuals traditionally concerned with the food problem who have been conducting programs among the poor overseas, the conviction has been growing in recent months that there needs to be a broad campaign to remind the American people about this basic problem of hunger and the responsibility of this rich nation to take some leadership in an attack on it. President Lyndon Johnson's eight-year-old initiative for a War on Hunger may be dead, but the problem he addressed remains. There are more hungry people in the developing world now than ever before, and their plight will be made more difficult by the soaring prices of grain and oil—the latter because it is also a basic ingredient of the chemical fertilizers that have made possible the Green Revolution and the relative gains of the past few years in the poor countries.

Out of this ferment and the meetings and the pressure has come a broad coalition of private organizations and individuals to support a world food policy that this country should advocate at the World Food Conference and elsewhere. Several of these organizational representatives and others met in Washington on February 27 and established the World Hunger Action Coalition. Senator Percy of Illinois and Governor Shapp of Pennsylvania are Co-chairmen of its Advisory Commission. A conference to study this question further and promote the policy was held in St. Paul on June 6-7, with strong organizational and bipartisan endorsement and participation. This movement springs from the grass roots; it began to take form at a conference in Hershey, Pennsylvania, last December 6 and 7, sponsored by some of the private organizations and convened by the Secretary of Agriculture of the State of Pennsylvania. Now it has moved, appropriately to the American heartland; and other regional conferences are planned for other sections of the country.

In order to get a world food policy adopted by the leaders of this country and pursued vigorously in the World Food Conference and beyond, not only the organizational support of those already in the field, but the moral force of those who have a responsibility to exert such leadership is needed. The Overseas Development Council survey cited above clearly indicated that the American people want to help *because it is the right thing to do*—not because of world markets, competition with Communism, or fear that our raw materials will be cut off by the undernourished developing countries. This seems a very encouraging sign; it should also be a warning to legislators and administrators, and a shot in the arm to churchmen and others who are engaged in development education and charitable work.

A world food policy that addresses itself to the problem of hunger is vitally and immediately necessary, but by itself is not enough. People are hungry because they are poor. They are poor because they live in less developed countries or regions, because they do not or are not permitted to share in the fruits of development wherever they live, and because there are too many of them. We have to be concerned about improving the

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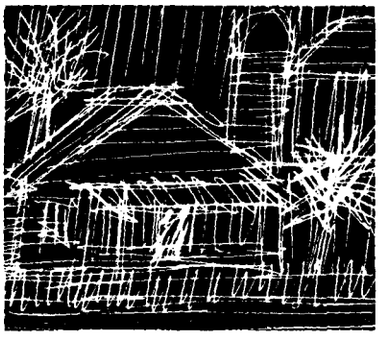
methods of food production and distribution in the developing countries and with getting as many people involved in the solution of their own problems as possible. The answer is not increasing mechanization of farming in the poor countries, but more labor-intensive agriculture that best fits the culture and stage of development of the country. We have evidence that the small, labor-intensive farm may be more efficient in both human and economic terms than the over-mechanized giant; and we have indications that the population growth rate tends to drop as a result of general economic development, rather than as a requisite of it.

Thus the problem of hunger is urging upon us not only the basic duty of charity, the corporal work of mercy, to feed the hungry, but the requirement of justice, which is that of development. As the Pope said in *Populorum Progressio*, "It is not just a matter of eliminating hunger, nor even of reducing poverty. The struggle against destitution, though urgent and necessary, is not enough. It is a question, rather, of building a world where every man, no matter what his race, religion, or nationality, can live a fully human life, freed from servitude imposed on him by other men or natural forces over which he has not sufficient control. . . . This demands great generosity, much sacrifice and unceasing effort on the part of the rich man. . . . Is he prepared to support out of his own pocket works and undertakings organized in favor of the most destitute? Is he ready to pay a higher price for imported goods so that the producer may be more justly rewarded?"

Food aid must, in short, be a component of a more generalized development program, based more on improving the quality of life for the individual than on the macro-economic considerations so loved by many of our planners. Development, after all, takes place in people; it is they who are its participants and its subjects, as well as its beneficiaries. After more than 25 years of foreign aid programs, however, it may come as something of a shock to find that, as World Bank President Robert McNamara told the UNCTAD meeting in Santiago, Chile, two years ago, the developing world is still one in which "hundreds of millions of people are not only poor in statistical terms, but are faced with day-to-day deprivations that degrade human dignity to levels which no statistics can adequately describe . . . a developing world . . . in which death and disease are rampant, education and employment scarce, squalor and stagnation common, and opportunity and the realization of personal potential drastically limited." To the American audience this forcible recognition of relative failure does not come across gracefully. American programs do not fail. But the facts are there. We need a reassessment of what we have done and what we propose to do in the international development field.

All this is not to accept the theses of critics from either right or left. From the right we hear that billions of dollars have been wasted, "poured down a rat hole," in unsound projects designed to help ungrateful people who vote against us in the UN, expropriate our corporations in their countries, and revile us as economic imperialists and neo-colonialists. From the left we are told that because the United States is a capitalist, profit-making, consumption-oriented country we cannot and should not try to help the developing countries through bilateral programs that essentially export the American way of life, with all its problems. While the first set of criticisms is entirely negative and anti-Christian and should be summarily dismissed, the latter set has some validity and should prompt us to reexamine our policies, our goals, and our methods with objectivity and humility—that unpopular, but realistic virtue. The current focus on hunger, involving, as it does, the recognition that the problems of development have not been solved, offers us an excellent opportunity to review, renew and rededicate.

There is a further aspect of this question that should not be ignored in our focus on world hunger. The



United States is part of the world, and the poor people of the U.S.—of whom there is a distressingly large number—are at one with the poor everywhere, even though in dollar terms they don't appear to be. They, too, are poor because they are undeveloped, non-participating and numerous. It would be a tragic mistake, a real miscarriage of justice, for us to concentrate so earnestly on the problems abroad that we ignore, or overlook, the injustices in our midst. In the city ghettos, in the rural slums, on the dusty roads of Appalachia, in the small bare rooms where some of the elderly live out their remaining years, we have the same kind of grinding poverty and crushing inhumanity as in the favelas and barrios of Latin America and the rat-infested hovels of Calcutta. A world food policy must include a food (and development) policy for this country as well.

What we are facing in the developing countries, then, is a crisis of hunger; and it is worsened by problems of leadership at home. Though Secretary Kissinger called for the World Food Conference, the White House is distracted by the President's personal problems—taxes, impeachment, Watergate, massive defections in the party ranks. The Congress is caught up in its investigation of

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oil profiteering, skyrocketing prices, unemployment, impending financial chaos, inflation, impeachment—as well as the extra dimension of an election year. The cause-groups are articulate and effective, but they stress almost exclusively domestic issues. Leadership in helping the hungry and poor in the rest of the world will not come from any of these—for a variety of understandable, if not altogether commendable reasons.

This leaves us—and perhaps properly—the religious groups, the charitable organizations, and the internationally civic-minded, who have begun to work together in a broad coalition on this matter, without in any way compromising their particular identities. They have the expertise and the experience, the moral stature and organizational know-how to orchestrate such a campaign and to draw up an agreed statement of world food policy that the U.S. delegation to the World Food Conference can advocate and support, a policy that will assure that the impetus that gave rise to the Conference will be stimulated, rather than dissipated, by it, a policy that will permit all of us to see that we have reached, at most, another "end of the beginning" in the field of international development. I hope that the Catholic organizations, in particular, will continue to work within this coalition, since it is wholly consistent with the teachings of the gospels and the Popes, and that the Catholic bishops, meeting around the time of the World Food Conference, will include in their annual statement a strong endorsement of the world food policy and the subsequent efforts to put it into effect.

Men of good will on Capitol Hill often say that they have to "vote their conscience" on foreign aid, because there is no constituency in the country for it. Their principle is to be commended, but the survey cited earlier would seem to belie their conclusion. An even clearer rebuttal to that conclusion, however, would be a successful grassroots campaign, led by the World Hunger Action Coalition and the organizations in which concerned Americans are active, to secure acceptance by the Congress and by the World Food Conference of a world food policy they support.

In addition to recognizing and acknowledging the problem, the policy statement should, as a minimum, also emphasize (a) that food aid is no substitute for longer-range development assistance, especially for the small farmer; (b) that quantity of food has to be balanced by considerations of quality of diet (i.e., nutrition); (c) that the food shortage is not temporary, but chronic and requires a worldwide system of food reserves under international management or coordination; (d) that hunger and malnutrition in the developed world are an integral part of the problem, requiring simultaneous and equal attention; (e) that any program to relieve world hunger must protect the farmer's right to a just return on his labor and his investment; (f) that equal attention has to be paid to measures to relieve the pressure of too rapid population growth on finite food supplies; and (g) that we now have to share scarce commodities, rather than our former abundance. There are no more surpluses, but there must be reserves.

This country has been favored with an unprecedentedly high material standard of living; to a considerable extent it has been earned by hard work, but to a large degree it has also resulted from good fortune. We should not pretend that we are better than others, though we are luckier; and we cannot pretend that it is right for 6 percent of the world's population to consume, even partially waste, nearly half of the world's product every year. "Development," said Pope Paul VI, "is the new name for peace." It is not a matter of charity, but of justice, for, as everyone knows, peace is the fruit of justice. That is what the World Food Conference should proclaim, and that is what we should do.

LE GRAND THEATRE de JEAN RENOIR

THE SCREEN

Le Petit Théâtre de Jean Renoir is an old-fashioned variety theater. The production put on in it has three acts just as a legitimate play would, but they are more like vaudeville acts, each one being distinct from the others in its billing, performers, content and style. The first act, for instance, has a rather artificial and formalistic tone to it. The main character is an old tramp, Le Clochard (Nino Formicola), who lives in a crazy sort of world where all feelings from cruelty to tenderness take on exaggerated proportions. First some swells going out for Christmas dinner hire Le Clochard to stare hungrily through the restaurant window, in order that his misery might increase their pleasure while eating. Then when the restaurateur gives him a meal of his own to get rid of him, he and his wife are, though starving, too moony with love to eat. He is purely a storybook character in a perverse kind of storybook world.

As the film's scriptwriter-director, Renoir therefore makes everything in that world contrived. Even the episodes of the plot have a specially constructed quality about them, for Le Clochard's own experience repeats in a curious way the experience of the *bons vivants* who hire him at the beginning. His enactment of their fantasy at the restaurant window proves too much for them. They leave in disgust and bickering without having eaten. And in a fashion contrary yet parallel, the fantasies that Le Clochard and his wife have of a former life of wealth also prove more powerful than their hunger. Although their fantasies have always been an

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alternative to the life they live, rather than a grotesque complement to it, the effect is the same: they cannot eat their meal either. Instead they get up and dance in the snow along the bank of the Seine where they are encamped. This revives their fantasies so completely that they lie down to sleep without having touched their meal at all, and in the morning they are found dead with looks of contentment on their faces.

Everything about Renoir's treatment here is designed to enhance our sense that this is a parable rather than a slice of real life. The sets are obviously all just that —sets with soap-flake snow, papier-mâché walls and twinkling lights embedded in a backdrop to suggest the city. Moreover, an optical effect that is very fancy, and fanciful, has a crucial role in this little morality play when the two old lovers' fantasies are suddenly projected onto the bleak stone embankment along which they dance.

The film's third section begins with a similar matching cut from one background to another, but the point being made by the optical effect this time is very different. Here Renoir stands beside the model of a proscenium stage he has used to introduce each of the three acts presented, and onto the stage he rolls a tiny marble which suddenly becomes, in mid-flight, a Bocci ball rolling along the ground in the South-of-France village where the play is set. What the optical effect suggests this time is some continuity between the play and the world beyond the stage. Renoir personally participates in the game of the drama this time and identifies with the characters.

If the first act of Renoir's little theater is a fable, the last is a mere anecdote, just the sort of tale that might actually be drawn from life. An old man (Fernand Sardou) has a young wife who loves him dearly, but who yields to her passion for his best friend, a doctor, also young, with whom she has an affair. Eventually the old fellow discovers the truth, quite by accident, and the doctor is so guilty he tries to challenge his friend to a duel which he intends to let the friend win. The old man brushes aside such romantically self-destructive gestures, however. They have no place in his world. After some anguished deliberation, he has decided simply to forgive his betrayers because he loves them too much to do otherwise. The emotions here, truer to life, are accommodating rather than absolute. At issue are man's weaknesses, and how they may save him as well as get him into trouble. Since the characters this time are people, not types, Renoir's treatment is a completely naturalistic one. He shoots his film on location rather than on sets, and he puts no particular construction on his plot.

The real significance of this vignette lies in the way it differentiates itself from the first one. This is not to say we wouldn't have guessed the stories making up this film were all directed by the same hand. Renoir is an *auteur* in the true sense of the term, and the acts put on in his little theater are all recognizable as the work of a single man. Although the film's middle segment, a satire on modern conveniences, is less sentimental then the other two, all three segments are pretty warm-blooded. They all demonstrate that self-contentment and abiding humanity which has pervaded Renoir's work since World War II.

But it is important to be aware of the variety in Renoir's variety theater because much of his late career has also been a reaction against the postwar trends and schools in filmmaking which he considers monomaniacal. Like Howard Hawks in this country, Renoir is a pluralist. He has directed crime melodrama and comedy of manners, screwball comedy and social protest, social satire and musicals, contemporary think films and costume epics. Directors of such versatility are of course dying out. But in their prime they were men who always suited their treatment to the script, as Renoir does here. The refreshing thing about *Le Petit Théâtre de Jean Renoir* is that it has always been so commodious.

COLIN L. WESTERBECK, JR.

CHARLES EDWARD EATON

THE WOMAN WHO COULD SIT ON HER HAIR

When she sat on it, it took hold in soil
Of buttocks, pulling back her heavy face
Like an exposed bulb, the thick roots spreading.
Something that grew from her was holding her
To earth, bending her back in agony.
Standing up was a wrenching upheaval,
A powerful gesture but alienating—
What can one do with the follicular bulb?

She flicks the moment and expertly dives,
Carrying with her her own wide pool of hair
As well as the skill of coming up for air,
One white hand rising like the Lady of the Lake.
But the man on the shore carries the sword,
Modern, theatrical, nonlegendary.
He waits when she dries her slick hair in ropes
To cut it like rushes they can lie in.

It hangs, the head's own static waterfall,
Moves, a great, coiled, wondrous, excreted thing:
One can smother, plunge, almost be cut down—
I saw the woman, a siren in the sun,
Combing through the thrill of expectations.
It was a sighing stroke, beyond arm's length.
She gathered up enough for daffodils,
Making the yellow martyr bide its time.

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selected responses

Homosexual Rights

Commonweal's May 24 editorial, "Homosexual Rights," and Michael Novak's May 31 column, "Gay Is Not Liberation," produced an unusually heavy reader-response. What appear below are representative excerpts of some of the letters received.

THE EDITORS

New York, N. Y.

To the Editors: . . . Novak is distressingly confused when, having stated that "To free homosexuals from the bonds of silence, fear, self-rejection, fear of blackmail and the rest is surely an important social gain," he proceeds two paragraphs later to state that homosexuals should not be given equality before the law in jobs and housing. Doesn't Novak see the contradiction he has created? If I hide my homosexuality (living bound in silence, in fear of blackmail) Novak will reward me with the law's equality. But if I take any part in the movement "to free homosexuals from the bonds of silence," an objective which Novak hails as an important social gain, then he will punish my honesty, withholding from me the equal protection of the law in matters of jobs and housing. In this case virtue must truly be its own (and only) reward.

Novak is perfectly entitled to be a bigot, just as anti-Semites are entitled to be anti-Semites, and racists to be racists. But we do insist (and the "we" does not mean the homosexual community, but the community of civilized opinion) that such bigots not impose their bigotry upon society through force of law. The gay liberation movement does *not* ask society "to approve of overt homosexual behavior," as Novak seems to think. We don't care whether society approves or disapproves. We do ask that society, in the form of the police power of the state, keep out of the bedroom. I do not seek to impose my company on Novak, nor do I particularly want his company imposed on me—I am allergic to bigots and doubly so when they come masked as intellectuals. But I must insist that Novak not impose his fears and bigotry upon me in the area of jobs and housing.

I feel sorry for Novak and those who share his position, for while I do not begrudge him his rights to his views and his life, he begrudges me a similar right to mine. How insecure Novak must be, for while my world is large enough to encompass him, his is too narrow to encompass me; his *private* life does not frighten me, but mine frightens him.

Christian homosexuals must deal with the Church as they will. I left the Church (Protestant) years ago and on several grounds, not the least being my conviction that Christianity as a body of teaching was anti-sexual, not simply anti-homosexual. But the figure of Jesus within history remains of grave importance to me, a non-Christian. Jesus, Jewish teacher, avatar of God, a man whose force still reaches across the centuries, despite Christianity, Cardinal Cooke and Michael Novak. It was Jesus who said—Novak take note—"I tell you truly, the taxgatherers and harlots are going into the Realm of God before you." DAVID MCREYNOLDS

Detroit, Mich.

To the Editors: As regards your editorial on homosexual rights, I find myself amused that you allude to our being made in the "image of God" while intimating through your choice of words and phrasing that that "image" may be somewhat besmirched. . . .

You deride the Archdiocese of New York for its "traditional" stance. You commend yourselves for the courage (?) of your own position. However, where are you actually in relation to that tradition? "Dignity" chose its name to say it felt that appelation inclusive of our "Who as well as What"; your editorial hints at an "in spite of." Darlings, everyone knows *Commonweal* feels even a dog should be given an occasional bone and shouldn't be kicked too hard unless it's down. Personally, I prefer the honesty in the archdiocesan statement . . . JOHN L. KAVANAUGH

Ashtabula, O.

To the Editors: Few could disagree with Michael Novak's basic argument that the symbolism of homosexual acts is not consistent with Christian marital symbolism. Nor would many deny that societies must make choices among the symbols that will be favored by law. However, rational men might well be hesitant to conclude from these, as does Mr. Novak, that the Catholic tradition ought to reject "equal legal status in housing and jobs to those who practice homosexual acts." While the preservation of the institution of marriage is a desirable aim, it has never been the ultimate criterion of Catholic morality. Even if it were, could this aim justify depriving certain people of their rights; that is, does the end justify the means? Furthermore, is the means even effective: How could marriage benefit from denying equal employment to practicing homosexuals? If Christian marriage is to survive only in an atmosphere of such oppression, is it worth it? Is it Christian? Incredibly, this is the position of Mr. Novak, a position which seems a classic example of his own statement: "Most evils do present themselves in the guise of moral goodness."

. . . It is possible to allow practicing homosexuals to live and work without allowing that their actions are morally good. In fact, Christian charity demands

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that we allow them this freedom. Mr. Novak gives too little credit to Christian charity and symbolism in his fear that marriage would be destroyed by the recognition of homosexuals' basic rights. Symbols are resilient; their beauty lies in their ambiguity and ambivalence, in their tolerance of contradiction and paradox. To force on them an inflexibility reminiscent of the rigorism of natural law teleology is to do a disservice to Catholic morality

DANIEL E. HYLAND

Boston, Mass.

To the Editors: . . . My involvement with the gay community as the president of a national organization of gay Catholics, and other interested persons, has put me in communication with various people across the country. Most of these people are gay Catholics who do not believe that the Church or society is right in condemning them on the basis of their sexual preference. Nor do we believe that anyone has the right or the power to deny us the use of our God-given sexuality . . .

Our belief is based on sound Catholic moral theology, which incorporates the ideas of such noted theologians as The Passionist's Social Concerns Forum and the Salvatorian Fathers' Justice and Peace Commission. These men and many others have contributed to our store of theological arguments which answer those individuals who would condemn our stand. There is much more involved here than homosexual acts, for the same moral reasoning applies to heterosexual acts as well. The whole notion of sex as being for other than procreative purposes is outlined. We believe that sex is also meant for pleasure as a sign of the shared joy of two people who love each other, as well as an expression of deep commitment between two persons.

There are many who call our position sinful, wrong and evil. We say, "You have a right to your own beliefs. We affirm your right to hold your beliefs; however, we do not expect you to force your views on us, anymore than we want to force our beliefs on you. All we are asking is to be given our rights as human beings. Don't tell us we're going to Hell; we don't believe you. If we're going to burn for eternity, it will be because we close ourselves off to Christ in our brothers and sisters. Don't tell us that we must be celibate; celibacy is simply not in the nature of all people. Don't tell us to change our sexual orientation either, for we can't do that anymore than you can."

The State and even the Church cannot legislate "morality" on an individual basis; in the final analysis, each person has to answer directly to God for his or her own actions. The Church and the State exist to guide us in making decisions in light of what we know about Christ and His teachings. Sound theology has been and still is raising serious questions as to whether homosexual acts can be termed as objectively sinful.

We call upon society, and upon each of you reading this, to be aware of our needs as human beings. Help us to change the laws which are used to persecute us. Make it illegal to discriminate against us. Open your churches and lives to our presence. We won't hurt you. The fact is that we're already present, yet we remain hidden very carefully, because you have the power to hurt us. As long as we call this the land of the free, and some people are not free, then we are liars. . . .

PAUL A. DIEDERICH
National President, Dignity

Philadelphia, Pa.

To the Editors: If Correspondence constituted all of *Commonweal* for the next year, I am not sure my queries/responses to Novak's "Gay Liberation" could be exhausted.

Some openers: What research exists to prove keeping gays as second-class citizens before the law has helped adolescents not confuse their images of sexual roles/identity in our society? How could Jesus suspend a law denying "symbolic equality" for sexual variance, if the familial-progeny symbolism was and is so "overarching?" What church/state laws would Novak want us to establish for couples who chose sterilization at some time in their life? Do holy and hard-working gay clergy sharing the same rectory, who claim to be celibate, merit the second-class status he proposes?

REV. MYRON JUDY, O.CARM.

New York, N.Y.

To the Editors: Although it might seem inappropriate for a non-Catholic to interject his views in a controversy within the Roman Catholic Church, there are certain implications of the Church in regard to the issues of gay liberation and gay civil rights that affect all people, Catholic and non-Catholic, gay and straight.

Your editorial, while supporting gay civil rights, equivocates on the more important issue of homosexuality itself. If it were not for the anti-homosexual teachings of Jewish and Christian scriptures, however, it would be unlikely that western civilization would have denied civil rights to gay people to the extent that we were burned at the stake in the Middle Ages and in the crematoria at Auschwitz.

Christians today can no longer argue that the passion story in the Gospels is inspired scripture and so cannot be tampered with, because they have seen the legacy of that story in the pogroms, the ghettos and the concentration camps. . . .

All people of conscience today promise there will never again be a holocaust of the Jews. Do these people choose not to remember that homosexuals also were murdered at Auschwitz? How are they doing their part to protect their homosexual sisters and brothers from the hatred that Jewish and Christian teaching has propagated? Michael Novak would surely not advocate mass Jewish conversion to Christianity as the Christian response to Auschwitz; how can he prescribe celibacy for gay people as the answer for our oppression?

. . . Christian theologians have come to recognize that the teachings of Christian tradition are at least in part responsible for the holocaust of European Jewry, not to mention the *autos-da-fé* of the Middle Ages. Is it not time for Christian and Jewish theologians to-

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day to realize the guilt borne in the past and continuing to be borne at this very moment by "religious" people who teach that homosexuality is unnatural and therefore bad?

CARL BENNETT

Boston, Mass.

To the Editors: Could you have Michael Novak print up a batch of those gay-Jesus holy cards, so we can alert all of our male friends and associates how not to look? In this age of sexual chaos, it is downright salvific to know that Novak knows what homosexuals look like. Which must be more than reassuring to one who believes that homosexuals have dignity in the Church, along "with the irate and the lascivious, with the machiavellian and the pompous, with the hypocrites and those on whose souls lies the ash of tedium."

Also, was it the typo goblins or Novak's mind that produced this sentence: "What was heretofore done by tradition, by habit, by unconscious common consent ought now, perhaps, to be chosen consciously and freely"? Ought to be chosen freely: rare wordfellows indeed.

Gay may not be liberation, but neither is muddled thinking. . . .

JAMES HIETTER, S.J.
Editor, *SJ News*

New York, N.Y.

To the Editors: There has never been any dialogue between homosexuals and the rest of the Church, which is why there are voices in the gay liberation movement which are hedonistic and virtually anti-religious. But for the same reason I am sorry to have to admit that my fellow Catholics, tragically, have nothing to offer me in the way of advice or understanding. They have to learn to listen to us. For the Catholic homosexual, the rest of the Church is a terribly oppressive force which schizophrenically offers grace and salvation at the same time.

I truly do not want to be hateful towards Mr. Novak, or even snidely bitter, but I don't know any other words to describe his attitude except that it reflects a nice-nigger mentality.

"We love 'em as long as they recognize they're more wounded by original sin than straights, and stay in their place," says Massa Novak. "Can't understand why they don't like to be alone in their nice supportive closets."

ROBERT HAWES

Philadelphia, Pa.

To the Editors: I was angered and saddened by the article entitled "Gay is Not Liberation" by Michael Novak. But after some reflection, I was not very surprised. After all, the mainstream of the Roman Catholic Church has a big stake in economic, ecological and sexual domination. And Mr. Novak seems to be making himself a spokesman for this tradition of domination, especially in regard to sexuality. . . .

. . . We have long held procreativity (and this in marriage) to be the guiding norm for a legitimate sexual act. But even that valuable and symbolic connection between heterosexual acts and the family has been broken as a mechanistic necessity (otherwise the Church would never celebrate a marriage between two sterile persons, tolerate birth control as it does, or celebrate the conception of its own Savior without a heterosexual act!)

We cannot merely mourn this break, but recognize its calling us to responsible human freedom. It is also signaling to us our desperate need for a new criterion to measure the good and holy use of our sexuality. I suggest that this new criterion should be mutuality, or non-exploitation. For it seems that the opposite of love is not lust, but exploitation. Persons who are striving to love are striving to be mutual. They are not exploiting or dominating each other. And this applies to heterosexuals and homosexuals, the married and single. . . .

(REV.) PAUL MORRISSEY, O.S.A.

Milwaukee, Wisc.

To the Editors: Michael Novak has been called. His is the "vocation to offer the dignity of resistance" to gay liberation, which he sees as "one more false god, one more false prophecy." Those of us who have benefited from his earlier works, who have used his writings in our theology classes, who have watched his translation and extension of the insights of Bernard Lonergan to the problems of faith and politics—those of us gay Catholics who had grown to expect methodological rigor from him are disappointed. . . .

One wonders what Novak means by homosexuality or, indeed, by homosexual. Is homosexuality merely "an involuntary tendency of the psyche"? Towards what? With what human components involved, etc.? Are homosexuals simply to be described negatively: "regarding the opposite sex, some surely draw a blank, or are deeply afraid, or are repelled"? These descriptions seem facile and inadequate especially for one who has so often talked about persons as complex "dramatic subjects" (an insight mediated by the gay movement in its preference for the term "gay" rather than the technical, one-dimensional terms "homosexuality/homosexual").

One does not expect Novak in his brief essay to engage in a detailed, lucid, defensible description-explanation of homosexuality/homosexual. Nevertheless, one is left confused at the descriptions and correlations: on the one hand, he notes that "homosexuality as a trait of personality is . . . potentially of the highest beauty," but then lists "homosexual" with "kleptomaniac . . . egotist . . . arrogant s.o.b. . . . irate . . . lascivious . . . machiavellian . . . pompous . . . hypocrites." Are any of these "a trait of personality . . . potentially of the highest beauty"? If not, what is the correspondence? In a critical analysis, one would expect some distinctions, clarification, analysis, etc.

. . . That Novak ignores questions is obvious; that he provides no critical analysis—positive or negative—is disappointing; that he will address them in the future is hoped for; that the movement for liberation and civil rights among gays in general and gay Catholics in particular will continue, in spite of Novak's essay, is certain.

PARIS R. BALDACCI
Member, Salvation Gay Ministry Task Force

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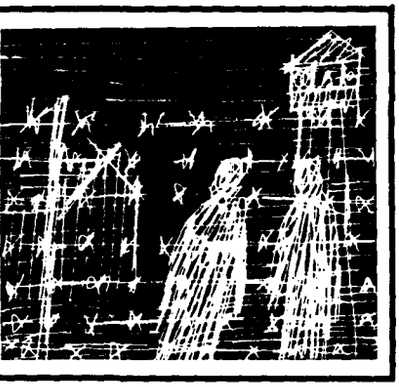
ELI WIESEL'S SONG: LOST & FOUND AGAIN

ROBERT McAFEE BROWN



THE MYSTERY of the coming of Messiah, the belief that history moves toward a culmination and fulfillment, is one thing Jews and Christians share in common, even though they stand on opposite sides of a great divide in their interpretation of that hope.

Over forty years ago, Martin Buber, in an essay on "The Two Foci of the Jewish Soul," described the ultimate division between Judaism and Christianity messianically, but also suggested that our point of deepest division was the very area in which we have the most in common. What we have in common, he said, is "a book and an expectation." To the Christian the book is a forecourt, to the Jew it is the sanctuary. But, he went on, "In this place we can dwell together, and together listen to the voice that speaks here." The Christian's expectation, he said, "is directed toward a second coming, ours to a coming which has not been anticipated by a first." But, he continued, "we can wait for the advent of the One together, and there are moments when we may prepare the way before him together."

Buber could state realistically that "Pre-messianically our destinies are divided. Now to the Christian the Jew is the incomprehensibly obdurate man, who declines to see what has happened; and to the Jew the Christian is the incomprehensibly daring man, who affirms in an unredeemed world that its redemption has been accomplished." Even in this division, Buber concluded, we can engage in a common watch, holding fast to our own separate faiths, but caring "more for God himself than for our images of God." (Buber, *Israel and the World*, Schocken Books, New York, 1948, pp. 39-40)

It is in this spirit that Christians must approach, with profound gratitude, the throbbing, despairing and yet strangely hopeful song that Eli Wiesel has recovered from his Hasidic childhood and sung again for us in *Ani Maamin* (Random House, $7.50). It is an old song, a song about the Messiah and his failure to appear, a probing that is by turns insistent, pleading, tearful, strident, despairing and yet finally full of hope, both veiled and visible, that can, in spite of all the horror and heartache, enable us to face the future.

ROBERT McAFEE BROWN *teaches in the Religious Studies Department at Stanford University, California.*

The Messianic coming, as Buber intimates, poses different problems for Christians and Jews, and part of the Jewish contribution to Christian Messianism is a reminder that a claim that the Messiah has come is as much a problem as it is a solution. Our problem, of course, is that if the Messianic hope has been fulfilled in Jesus of Nazareth, if redemption has come, evil nevertheless persists demonically in the "redeemed" world. What kind of Messiah is it that we announce as "good news," when the world seems so unchanged by his advent? Indeed, are we not worse off if the world we must announce as the result of Messiah's work within it is a world in which evil persists and suffering continues unchecked? Better no Messiah, it might be claimed, than such a one.

If those are not real "problems" to Christians, then Christians need more than ever to hear the voice of Jews, who, as Buber reminds us, "experience, perhaps more intensely than any other part, the world's lack of redemption." For if Christians have a problem that forces them to ask, "Why, if the Messiah has come, is the world so evil?," Jews also have a problem that forces them to ask, "Why, with the world so evil, has the Messiah not come?" Further questions unfold: What will it take to bring him? If God's children stand in such crushing need of deliverance, why is the deliverance withheld? Can one, in such a world, have any hope for the future? Can one hope that even yet, at this late time, fulfillment and redemption may still come? Most poignant of all, may it not be the case that even if Messiah comes, *he will come too late?*

Wiesel, out of the horror of his own experience at Auschwitz and that of his entire generation, has wrestled with the Messianic problem in an autobiographical chronicle, half a dozen novels, and three books of essays. With infinite variety, the Messianic theme is raised, the question is asked, responses are sought. The strands of hope seem slender and often virtually invisible, but there always remains a willingness to persist in asking the questions. For if man often seems to be "hope turned to dust," he is also, amazingly, "dust turned to hope." On occasion, most notably perhaps at the conclusion of *The Gates of the Forest*, a hope is expressed that the Messiah is not one man, but can and must be present in all men, whose very presence in the world, singing, praying, crying and obdurately questioning, is somehow a sign that forsakenness is not the only world.

Ani Maamin is Wiesel's latest and most poignant pressing of the Messianic question. It is the libretto of a cantata, set to music by Darius Milhaud, and appears in the text in both French and English. The writing is in blank verse, spare and taut, and its very economy of line, apparent in both languages, contributes to the enormous anguish built up as the questions addressed to God assume an almost unbearable poignancy. *Ani*

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maamin beviat ha-Mashiah is one of Maimonides' thirteen articles of faith: "I believe in the coming of the Messiah." Wiesel sang the song as a young Hasidic Jew in Transylvania, and believed it. He heard it sung in the death camps and wondered how it could continue to be sung. How could one "believe in the coming of the Messiah" during and after the holocaust? So the song was "lost." Could it possibly be "found" again? The book is Wiesel's exploration of that possibility. No telling can capture it at second-hand, but even a telling at second-hand can force one toward an encounter with the tale at first-hand.

The cantata retells the old story of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob wandering the earth, only this time they are doing it during the era of the holocaust. They return to the heavenly precincts to plead the cause of the Jews before God in this, the time of greatest tribulation. Each recounts a crucial event from his own past, Abraham as the first to affirm God as the Redeemer of men, Isaac as the one who faced his own sacrifice uncomplainingly, and Jacob as the one who dreamed of a ladder to earth from heaven. Each insists that God has abandoned the future promised to them and their children, a future that has been turned to ashes. Jacob asks:

> You promised me to watch over Israel
> Where are You? What of your promise?
> You promised me blessings for Israel
> Is this your blessing?

The patriarchs weep. The angels weep. But God does not weep. God remains silent.

Again they implore him:

> Faithful God, behold the torment
> That bears your seal,
> As does the faith
> Of your victims.

The slaughter, the devastation, continues, even as they speak. And with each Jewish death, another fragment of the Temple goes up in flames. Hope is being murdered as never before. But from the celestial tribunal, only silence.

The pleaders intensify their urgency. Abraham did not know that the road from Ur to Canaan would end in Treblinka. Isaac did not know that the vision from Mount Moriah would include Majdanek. Jacob on his way to Bethel did not know

> That every road
> At dusk
> Would lead to Auschwitz.

Each gives an example of the utter destruction the holocaust has brought: a bunker in Warsaw where a Jewish hand had to silence forever the cry of a Jewish child, a death march in a forest where a father cannot console a son, a despairing suicide in a concentration camp. The Chorus supports the patriarchs and cries out to Heaven: "Your children implore you: Hear and answer." But Heaven remains silent.

There follows a plea not only for those who have been slaughtered but also for those who have survived and feel guilty for surviving. There is an anguished question about the divine capriciousness that grants indulgence to executioners while chastisements are inflicted on children.

Finally the silence of heaven is broken, not by God, but by an angel who comes to plead his cause. We hear the familiar arguments offered in the book of Job: Who are men to question the divine power or plan? God has his reasons. Man is not to challenge but to accept. There will be salvation in the end.

But Abraham interrupts with the crucial question:

> You showed me messianic times
> But what kind of messiah
> Is a messiah
> Who demands
> Six million dead
> Before he reveals himself?

The angel can only respond:

> God consoles.
> That is enough.

At that, the pleading turns to anger. It is *not* enough! It can never be enough. Abraham, Isaac and Jacob respond that they and their people will never be consoled. It is impossible to be "consoled" for Belsen, or "rewarded" for Birkenau, or "forgetful" of Majdanek.

And so they decide to leave heaven. All they can do in the face of such response is to return to earth and tell their people that there is no hope: "For now it is clear: God knows—and remains silent. God knows—so it must be his will." The executioners win, for God is silent. They step back to leave, and God is still silent.

. . . Which would be, of course, a dramatic place to conclude. Who could blame Wiesel, or any Jew—or any person sensitive to the sufferings of others, for that matter—for concluding there? A plea had been made (*Do* something . . . send the Messiah) and the plea had been ignored.

But the song does not conclude. It goes on. Something new enters in. The chorus, which has been supportive of the patriarchs' outcry, ceases to echo the outcry, and instead invokes blessing upon them. Blessing! God seems not to provide a blessing, so Israel will provide it. If God remains silent, Jews who have revered his name will not.

Each of the patriarchs, as he withdraws from the heavenly throne, recounts a tale in which, in the face of insurmountable odds and a silent heaven, a Jew nevertheless affirms. In one instance, a child expresses belief in the one who is carrying her, futilely, away from the Nazi machine guns. In another, a Jew in a doomed village suddenly "sings/ Of his ancient and lost faith," proclaiming that he still believes in the coming of the Messiah, even though he is late, even though God be unwilling. In a third, a Jew in a death camp on the first night of Passover, unable to celebrate the meal nevertheless can say,

> Still, I recite the Haggadah
> As though I believe in it.
> And I await the prophet Elijah,
> As I did long ago,

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ending with the affirmation:

I shall wait for you.
And even if you disappoint me
I shall go on waiting.

"Auschwitz," he declares, "has killed Jews/ But not their expectation."

After each of these recitals of an indomitable willingness to go on waiting, to refuse to succumb fully to despair, the Narrator informs us that God is being moved. The first time "a tear clouds his eyes," then "a tear streams down God's somber countenance," and finally, "God, surprised by his people, weeps for the third time—and this time without restraint, and with—yes—love." No one sees this weeping. It is veiled from the sight of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. But his children's faith has moved him, deeply. Moved him, indeed, in the most liberal sense of the word, for as Abraham, Isaac and Jacob go away, the Narrator informs us that although they do not know it, "They are no longer alone: God accompanies them, weeping, smiling, whispering." So finally God *does* speak, and "The word of God continues to be heard. So does the silence of his dead children."

The presence of God is a veiled presence. No one knows of it. But there is another hope as well, suggested in each of the examples that finally moves God to a weeping and smiling engagement with his people. This is the hope that Abraham, Isaac and Jacob have in their children, in the ongoing life of the Jewish community. Before the machine guns, the child bespoke faith; in the village, a Jew continued to believe; in the death camp an inmate affirmed that, even there, he would wait for the Messiah to come. These acts of presence are not veiled. And it is out of such affirmation, of a presence and a hope both veiled and unveiled, that the story of God's people continues to be written.

Wiesel does not only write a song *about* the hope for a future that lies in Israel's children. He places himself within the circle of that hope by dedicating the book to his own child:

For Shlomo-Elisha
Son of Eliezer,
Son of Shlomo,
Son of Eliezer.

These are the first words one reads after the title page. They cannot really be read until after one has read the final page. Then they become a smile through tears.

Buber told us that "we can wait for the advent of the One together, and there are moments when we may prepare the way before him together." Wiesel in *Ani Maamin* makes his contribution to that preparing of the way. He has given us a creation of fearful beauty. He has found a lost song. He has sung it for us. If we are to "prepare the way . . . *together*," our own present task is, in the fullness of gratitude, to listen.

BOOKS

A ROSE FOR A ROSE FOR A ROSE

CARLOS BAKER

Charmed Circle: Gertrude Stein & Company

JAMES R. MELLOW

Praeger, $12.95

It may be a legitimate surmise that James R. Mellow, art critic for the *New York Times*, was attracted to Gertrude Stein in part because of the superb collection of modern painters that once graced the walls of her pavilion and atelier at 27 rue de Fleurus in Paris. His lively account of these pictures, and of the artists who painted them, would alone justify a new life of their erstwhile owner, and throughout the book Mr. Mellow enjoys a happy field day with the painters and their work. But if the inception can justly be said to lie there, the development moves well out beyond even so glowing a center as that provided by Matisse, Cézanne, Picasso, Gris, Braque, Marie Laurencin, Vallotton, and the rest. For Miss Stein, who used to sit Buddha-like "in one of the high-backed Renaissance chairs in the studio," gave, says Mellow "the impression of an irresistible force disguised as an immovable object," and established herself as a center for an ever-widening circle of people who did not paint—the literal hundreds of friends, admirers, enemies, and interlopers who came to see her collection, listen to spirited monologues, sample the delicate refreshments, and absorb whatever wit and wisdom were flowing that day. The names here were likewise eminent, or shortly became so: Bernard Berenson, the Cone sisters, Virgil Thomson, Sherwood Anderson, William Carlos Williams, Thornton Wilder, Cocteau, Janet Flanner, Apollinaire, Sylvia Beach, T. S. Eliot, Ford Madox Ford, Fitzgerald, Hemingway, and Mabel Dodge, to name a few.

Miss Stein did not, of course, succeed in charming them all. Some departed the premises to impugn her as a charlatan, others as a magpie who picked up scintillant ideas from her brighter contemporaries and passed them off as her own. Not everyone found her appearance or her manner invariably irresistible. Berenson, having

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met her one summer in Florence, later said that "her apparently seamless garment made her look like the proto-Semite, a statue from Ur of the Chaldees." Others, less learned, were variously reminded of an obese Roman senator or the Cumaean Sibyl in Michelangelo's fresco. Both her masculinity and her weight offended Agnes Ernst, a young reporter for a New York newspaper, who called her "a heavy woman who seemed to squat rather than sit, her solid mass enveloped in a monklike habit of brown corduroy." Another of her fellow-Americans, the painter Joseph Stella, reacted adversely to what he called this "immense woman carcass . . . enthroned on a sofa in the middle of the room . . . with the forceful solemnity of a pitoness [sic] or a sibylla . . . examining pitiless all newcomers, assuming a high and distant pose."

For her part, as her biographer says, "she had a passion for acquaintanceship . . . but a limited capacity for untroubled friendship." Some of her relationships were notably durable—the forty-year liaison with Alice B. Toklas was the supreme exemplum. Otherwise "her friendships were like her collection of bric-a-brac: delicate objects, curiosities that took her fancy, souvenirs from her travels or the gifts of her fame . . . She had no patience for protecting them, for putting them out of danger. They had to withstand the lively traffic of her salon . . . The more fragile were broken and had to be discarded. She would be sorry or annoyed—but usually discovered that the pleasure of a new friendship could console her for the loss of the old."

Apart from Alice, her true passion was for fame, what she called *la gloire*. Her first real taste of it seems to have come just before the first world war, coincident with the New York Armory show of 1913, the much-heralded, much-maligned exhibition that included Duchamp's *"Nude Descending the Staircase,"* which one critic wittily described as an "explosion in a shingle factory." Miss Stein enjoyed a small explosion of her own when Mabel Dodge, as her self-appointed publicist, compared her work in a laudatory article to that of Picasso, suggesting that both had achieved break-throughs into new realms of being. Gertrude herself had already made a similar claim following a visit to Spain in 1912 during which she attempted to catch the rhythms of the gypsy dancers at Granada in a prose poem called (one hopes unpunningly) "A Sweet Tail (Gypsies)." Part of it went as follows: "This is the sun in. This is the lamb of the lantern with chalk. With chalk a shadow shall be a sneeze in a tooth in a tin tooth, a turned past, a turned little corset, a little tuck in a pink look and with a pin in, a pin in. Win lake, eat splashes dig salt change benches." Her droll explanation was that this, and others like it, represented her attempt to do abstract portraits in *her* verbal medium just as Picasso was "doing abstract portraits in painting."

The claim was extravagant. To others, both then and since, the direction she followed in the public writing of her maturity led only to a No-person's Land somewhere between the extremes of babytalk and balderdash. This view of the matter may well have been in Ellery Sedgwick's mind when, in politely rejecting a "Portrait of Cézanne" which she had submitted to *The Atlantic Monthly*, he suggested that "perhaps you would some day write me an entirely intelligible comment upon these paragraphs of yours. I ask this in all seriousness, for as I near my second childhood, I yearn increasingly to be educated."

Whoever now yearns for further education in the works and days of Miss Stein can find it in Mellow's admirable and engaging book, filled with priceless vignettes that are art objects in themselves. Patiently but never doggedly he follows her errant fortunes from childhood in Pennsylvania and California to her undergraduate years at Radcliffe, her medical studies at Hopkins, her early Lesbian fictions, the long expatriation, the displacement of her ebullient brother Leo by Alice Toklas, the slow rise to fame with

SOLZHENITSYN

"I think that few people having read this book would be the same as when they opened its first page. In this respect, it seems to me that nothing in Russian or world literature can compare with it."
—*Roy Medvedev*

The GULAG Archipelago

Translated by Thomas P. Whitney

Harper & Row
10 E. 53rd St., New York 10022
1817

At bookstores $12.50 cloth, $1.95 paper

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Three Lives, The Making of Americans, and other books until her best-selling *Autobiography of Alice B. Toklas*, set down in six weeks at her country house at Bilignin, and *Four Saints in Three Acts*, with an all-black cast and music by Virgil Thomson, prepared the way for her triumphal tour of the U.S.A. after thirty years' absence. She could be mean and dictatorial but also generous and witty; an expansive Erdmutter in Alice-in-Wonderland sandals or a supreme egotist whose claims for her interminable and boring verbal escapades went well beyond belief. Mellow has caught her perfectly, all woolly and a yard wide. When James Branch Cabell cornered Alice Toklas at a dinner in Richmond during the American tour and asked if Gertrude Stein were serious, Alice answered, "Desperately." That, said Cabell, put a different light on the matter. "For you," said Alice, "not for me."

It is to James Mellow's great credit that we close his book half in love with this curious pair of homely but gifted women.

The Mind Possessed

WILLIAM SARGANT

Lippincott, $7.95

The Medium, the Mystic, and the Physicist

LAWRENCE LeSHAN

Viking, $8.95

Life without Death?

NILS O. JACOBSON

Delacorte, $10

JOHN N. KOTRE

As soon as the spirit saw Jesus, it threw the boy into a fit, so that he fell on the ground and rolled around, foaming at the mouth. . . . Jesus noticed that the crowd was closing in on them, so he gave a command to the evil spirit. "Deaf and dumb spirit," he said, "I order you to come out of the boy and never go into him again!" The spirit screamed, threw the boy into a bad fit, and came out. The boy looked like a corpse, so that everyone said, "He is dead!" But Jesus took the boy by the hand and helped him rise, and he stood up. (Mark 9, 20-27)

Battle neuroses suffered during World War II were often cured in the same way as the boy's demon was expelled. Soldiers who had broken down and subsequently repressed their fear were given drugs and induced to "abreact," i.e., to relive at full emotional intensity the incident which had so terrorized them. Therapists would suggest to the patient that he was seeing once again the head of a friend being blown off or that he was trapped once again inside a burning tank. If their suggestions took hold, the patient would become increasingly agitated until he exploded in a violent outburst of emotion and then collapsed, motionless as the boy in the Gospel. Later he would come to, shake his head, smile, or perhaps weep; but if the abreactive experience had been intense enough, he felt purged, like the boy, of the demons that tormented him.

The two experiences of cure, argues William Sargant in *The Mind Possessed*, are physiologically identical. Indeed, the physiology underlying many states of possession by devils and mystical encounters with God—in the United States and Europe, in South America, the East, and Africa, in ancient times and modern—is practically a constant. And it is characterized in every case, according to Sargant, by heightened suggestibility on the part of the subject. The intensity of the experience overpowers its victim and renders him helpless in the presence of the cognitive explanation of it that is offered to him. *That* explanation—be it possession by Erszuli or baptism in the Spirit—is seized upon as the Ultimate and Absolute Truth, and so tenaciously does the subject cling to it that his subsequent life is often totally redirected.

To make his case Sargant cites accounts of mystics and healers and describes ritualistic dances, snake-handling revivals, voodoo, possession, exorcism: you name it, he has been there to witness (and often to film) it. The difficulty with his presentation is that his central observation—that physiologically identical experiences have a variety of cognitive interpretations—overpowers *him* and forces him into the awkward posture of psychological reductionism. His assumption, stated baldly, is by now classic: any way of knowing but my own (in this case, the rational-psychiatric) is a product of brainwashing. St. Paul's conversion is "dissociative mental collapse," speaking in tongues is "ecstatic hysterical trance," mystics fear sexual assault. Even systematic, rational theology falls to the axe: its purpose is to put continual strain on the nervous system, to wear its victim down to eventual submission and belief.

More willing to take psychic healing, telepathy, and mysticism on their own terms is Lawrence LeShan (*The Medium, The Mystic, and The Physicist*). LeShan is a tentative believer, entering the world of mediums and sensitives but not doctrinaire about what he discovers there. He respects rigorous experimental research and presents negative evidence. Best of all, he has tried to practice what he has learned:

A woman known to me, aged thirty-six years, had intermittent, very large "cold sores" for over twenty years. Two or three times a year she would get one on her lip and it would take approximately thirty days to heal. . . . I held one hand on each side of her face, not touching the affected area, for about twenty minutes in a strong Type 2 healing. Afterwards she reported that during the twenty minutes she had been conscious of several periods of heat, and one of "tingling" in the lip area. About one half hour later she left my office to drive home (a drive of about an hour); en route she felt suddenly a strong "tingling" in the lip area, she looked at it in the rear-view mirror, and in her words, "I nearly had an accident

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I was so surprised. I pulled off the road and sat for ten minutes watching the new skin regrow. The dead skin in the center did not seem to change, but new skin slowly grew over the whole raw pink area."

Other of his attempts at healing have failed; others have produced psychological instead of physical cures. And in one case a man asked for a long distance healing: LeShan agreed to do it that very night, and the next day the man reported a "miraculous cure." Later, X-rays substantiated his claim. There was a catch, however: the night of the cure LeShan had forgotten to do his part!

The main thesis of LeShan's book is that the world described by mystics, mediums, and sensitives *at the moment they acquire paranormal information* is identical to the world described by Einsteinian physicists. In this suprasensory world ("Clairvoyant Reality") all things are seen as part of a central unity. Indeed, a "thing" is important only in its relatedness to the whole; its individuality or separateness is illusory. Past, present, future—arbitrary segmentations of time—good and evil—an arbitrary value dichotomy—are meaningless, both in moments of possession and in modern relativity theory. Clairvoyant Reality is a world that makes real the Haiku that Kazantzakis put into the mouth of St. Francis:

I said to the Almond tree
"Sister, speak to me of God"
and the Almond tree blossomed.

LeShan's case is really too facile. That quotations from mystics read like quotations from physicists may still indicate more about the structure of our knowing apparatus than the structure of the real. And the fact that LeShan can effect some cures by tuning into Clairvoyant Reality does not prove that his theory is correct. Many different styles of psychotherapy, each with its own description of what is "really" happening, work—but all those explanations of the "real" cannot be true to the exclusion of others (which, in a different context, is what Sargant wished to say). But LeShan, at least, knows how to explore. He is worth following.

Life Without Death? was first published in 1971 and is now being translated into eight languages. Jacobson's book is a compendium of the most interesting findings in parapsychology arranged seductively to support the hypothesis of survival after death. And the reader *is* seduced: set up with a scientific, critical stance toward demonstrations of telepathy, clairvoyance, precognition, and psychokinesis, he suddenly finds himself in a world of dreams, floating psyches, apparitions, possessions, voices from outer space (recorded as background noise on tape recorders), and speaking in languages of which one has no knowledge (except in a previous existence, of course). We assume the initial analytical rigor *is still with us* but it has been quietly left at the door. In the end, poorly documented experiences capable of many interpretations have become "vast, copious material" supporting the survival hypothesis.

I salute Jacobson's wish to be fair and his willingness to piece improbable experiences into a theory, but I find him far too credulous. He acknowledges criticisms of psychic research and responds well to all but the big one: what about the selection process that brings material, spontaneous and experimental, into the annals of parapsychology? In particular, where is the list of precognitions and telepathic receptions that proved inaccurate? of experimental results that never exceeded chance? In the absence of such information one cannot assess the significance of apparently extraordinary events. As LeShan comments,"Coincidence has a long arm."

These three authors bring quite different attitudes to that miscellaneous category of human experience called psychic, mystical, or paranormal. Sargant films them from a distance but does not enter, tours the world but never leaves his psychiatric frame of reference. LeShan studies them and enters, explores but remains tentative, if not in his belief in Clairvoyant Reality, at least in his communication of it. And Jacobson warns himself and his reader to be critical before they enter, but he finds the fascination in-

"Where are we going, along this road we have been following for so long without once asking where it leads?

"Some have taken it to seek fortune, some to drive away care, some to seek out knowledge, and some in order to go home.

"We are going to do all these things at the same time: We are going to return to the obvious."

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CARLOS BAKER, Woodrow Wilson Professor of Literature at Princeton, is the author of *Ernest Hemingway: A Life Story* and the recently published novel, *The Gay Head Conspiracy* (Scribner's).

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side too great to heed his own words. He never returns.

There is too much in paranormal experience to dismiss it or to reduce it to mere psychological madness. I am impressed by the psychic healer and by incidents of the telepathic communication of emotion. But it is difficult to winnow exaggeration and hallucination from accurate report, and to ward off that long arm of coincidence. Speaking of evil in the world, Jesus said, "Be wise as serpents and simple as doves." If it's a good formula for maintaining idealism in an all too real existence, it's an even better one for the scientific investigation of extraordinary human experience.

CORRESPONDENCE

(Continued from page 371)

record of past corruption, neighborly violence, fraternal and imperial warfare, one can only assume that Horowitz operates with some notion of retrievable virginity. Worse, it is just this assumption of our providential past that underlies the hysterical politics and immoralities of the present. The disregard for complex past realities, the substitution of extraordinarily simpleminded myth for controlled and measured analysis, is no more the failure of the right in power than the left out.

Beware the invocation of "the Founding Fathers." Doubtless as the bicentennial approaches we have more to endure, but we can take the phrase as a sign that we are to be treated to some mythical version of the past to suit the needs of modern polemics. Horowitz leaps on all fours into the morass of garbled history, calling upon "the authors of the Federalist Papers such as Madison, Jay, Adams and Jefferson." The simple error of fact here exposes a much more fundamental confusion. In the first place, of course, neither Adams nor Jefferson wrote any of the Federalist Papers; neither were they at the Constitutional Convention (both being then on extended foreign service duty). Madison's principal collaborator on the Federalist Papers, Alexander Hamilton, Horowitz leaves unmentioned—out of ignorance or polemical purpose one isn't sure. Horowitz' argument follows from such lapses in knowledge. The Founding Fathers, Horowitz discovers, were confident that they had assured this country a government of honest if not brilliant men. Watergate has killed this benevolent business by an exposure of "collective immorality."

It is hard to take literally, or seriously, the declaration that dishonesty in the higher reaches of federal government has at last been discovered and made well known. One has only to recall that the Administration which presided over the first centennial celebration of our revolution and independence was that of U.S. Grant. We may have forgotten our past—as Horowitz has—but dishonesty is surely no new revelation (if one is to take Horowitz in full implication we are now rather in the process of forgetting our past and present rather than acknowledging loss

Going Along

THERE ARE LOTS of things wrong with televised Congressional hearings. They give instant fame to men who might never have won public attention by their intelligence, vision, or strength of character. . . . Yet, we must be grateful for these public hearings because of what they are revealing about our national moral character. We must find out whether we are becoming a nation of smooth-faced, soft-spoken, middle-aged boys, hustlers and packagers, loyal not to profoundly held personal convictions but to the Boss. It is as if the new Golden Rule in America had become: "To Get Ahead, Go Along."

A moral issue can still be the most powerful force in American politics —especially when it is clear, as it is today, that the network of deception and power-grabbing known as Watergate violates the moral foundations of democracy: trust in the people, respect for individual rights, and belief in some correspondence between civil, natural and divine law. The churches and universities that trained the conspirators might ask themselves again what they might do to raise the ideals of the young. And the Democratic party might ask itself why its young leaders have had so little of substance to say.

—*Commonweal, July 27, 1973*

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of innocence). More disturbing is the implication that the present crisis of the regime is simply a matter of honesty. If any assumption informs the deliberations of American constitution-makers in the late eighteenth century it was that men could be counted on to pursue their selfish interests by whatever means they could get away with. Forms of government were designed to limit the means available and to provide redress against men in power who were presumptively dishonest. The notion of transcendent virtue in our leaders and political system is the later nineteenth-century product of millennial nonsense about our chosen nationhood. It was just such nonsense that John Adams, for example, warned us about. "There is," he said, "no special providence for Americans." He and others thought the Constitution a worthy experiment because it defied simpleminded versions of government by honest men. Those who would perpetrate such folly were those ignorant of history and human nature. It was ignorance and intellectual sloth we should worry about. It is such ignorance and intellectual sloth and confusion which lie behind the present crisis brought on by self-righteous holders of power.

Horowitz' essay is yet another version of this condition, a demonstration of how pervasive is the abandonment of disciplined inquiry in public affairs. If our system of government proves unable to punish the clear crimes of Watergate and related affairs, it is because of this attitude in government and out which tolerates ignorance and is indifferent to intellectual discipline and knowledge of history as a basis for public discourse.

JERROLD C. RODESCH

Reply

Perhaps I am suffering from an acute case of intellectual myopia, but I have not got the slightest inkling of the purpose of Jerrold C. Rodesch's remarks. Indeed, he is correct that Adams and Jefferson were not direct contributors to the central thrust of the Federalist Papers, but their inspiration for many of its leading ideas is hardly under contest by historians.

Obviously, corruption was not invented by the Grant Administration. Such a reading of my piece is aberrant nonsense. My point in this connection is that going back in time, no Presidential regime since Grant can match the Nixon Administration for corruption and seediness. If the publication of the selected (indeed self-selected) portions of the Presidential tapes does not convince my fastidious critic of this, no amount of dialogue would have any purpose.

My essay did try to indicate the dangers in vitiating political responsibility by pointing to general moral dilemmas in national power as such. I am afraid that Mr. Rodesch in his sophistical wisdom manages just such a response to my piece. Hence, he ends up with a generalized fury directed at my critique of the imperial Presidency with nary a word about what my article was all about: the larger meanings and moorings of the Watergate affair.

IRVING LOUIS HOROWITZ

Perfectly Clear

Montreal, Canada

To the Editors: Henry Ten Kortenaar's comments on the Ardeatine massacre [Apr. 15] reveal a serious misunderstanding of the traditional doctrine of the Church as a *perfect society* when this is taken to mean that the Church "being on the same level of dignity and power as the worldly states, has to use their same weapons of diplomatic skill and wisdom—to the inevitable neglect of its prophetic mission, which belongs to a 'kingdom *not* of this world'." Now, as any manual of Church law will tell you, a *societas perfecta* is one that has *within itself* all the means to achieve its own distinctive end and therefore need not have recourse to some other society to find those means. Only two societies are seen to be "perfect" in this sense, the state and the Church. Other societies, such as the family, have to have recourse, to achieve their own goals, to societies outside themselves. The "diplomatic skill and wisdom" which the Church uses are not borrowed from the state—nor are they of the same kind. Cardinal Gasparri, himself a Vatican diplomat and the son of an ambassador, was once asked what were the diplomatic principles of the Holy See. His answer: "The New Testament."

WALTER BEDARD, O.F.M.
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